

Amendments to the Claims:

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A system for measuring diffusion of a compound across a membrane comprising:

a first base having first and second opposed surfaces and having a plurality of hollow projections extending outwardly from the first surface, each hollow projection having a tapered tip with an opening therein and a respective cavity contiguous with the opening disposed within the projection;

a second base having first and second opposed surfaces, the first surface of the second base having a plurality of recessed tapered openings therein adapted to engage the plurality of hollow projections, each recessed tapered opening being contiguous with a respective cavity that extends into the second base;

a membrane contacting the recessed tapered openings and the tips of the hollow projections, wherein the first base is fastened to the second base by a first fastening means, and wherein: a) each cavity within a hollow projection extends through the first base and forms an opening at the second surface of the first base; or b) each cavity within the second base extends through the second base and forms an opening at the second surface of the second base; or c) each cavity within a hollow projection extends through the first base and forms an opening at the second surface of the first base, and each cavity within the second base extends through the second base and forms an opening at the second surface of the second base; and

a retaining plate having perforations therein adapted to allow the hollow projections to pass therethrough, wherein the retaining plate is fastened to the second base by a second fastening means, wherein the membrane is disposed between the second base and the retaining plate.

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein at least a portion of at least the first or second base is transparent or translucent.

3. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the first fastening means is a removable means.
4. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each cavity within a hollow projection extends through the first base and forms an opening at the second surface of the first base.
5. (Original) The system of claim 4, further comprising a first covering means fastened to the second surface of the second base.
6. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the cavity in each hollow projection extends into the first base.
7. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the cavity in each hollow projection extends through the second base and forms an opening at the second major surface of the second base.
8. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a cover plate fastened to the second surface of the first base.
9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein at least a portion of the cover plate is transparent or translucent.
10. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the first and second surfaces of at least one of the first and second bases are major surfaces.
11. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second bases comprises a plate.
12. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each tapered tip has a cross-sectional profile that comprises at least one of an arcuate portion or a beveled portion.

13. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein each recessed tapered opening has a cross-sectional profile that comprises at least one of an arcuate portion or a beveled portion.

14. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the projections further comprise a body portion having at least one wall.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14, wherein the body portion is cylindrical.

16. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the membrane comprises a synthetic polymer.

17. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the membrane comprises animal tissue.

18. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein the membrane comprises skin.

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the second fastening means is removable.

Claims 21 - 36. (Canceled)

37. (Withdrawn) A method of measuring diffusion of a compound through a membrane comprising:

- providing a system according to claim 1;

- placing a first fluid composition into at least one cavity in the first base;

- placing a second fluid composition comprising a compound into at least one cavity in the second base, wherein the cavities in the first and second bases are in fluid communication through the membrane; and

- analyzing the compound content of the first fluid composition.

38. (Withdrawn) A method of measuring diffusion of a compound through a membrane comprising:

providing a system according to claim 4;

placing a first fluid composition into at least one cavity in the first base;

placing a second fluid composition comprising a compound into at least one cavity in the second base, wherein the cavities in the first and second bases are in fluid communication through the membrane; and

analyzing the compound content of the first fluid composition.

Claims 39-41. (Canceled)

42. (Previously Presented) A system, in kit form, for holding a membrane comprising:

a first base having first and second opposed surfaces and having a plurality of hollow projections extending outwardly from the first surface, each hollow projection having a tapered tip with an opening therein and a respective cavity contiguous with the opening disposed within the projection;

a second base having first and second opposed surfaces, the first surface having a plurality of recessed tapered openings therein adapted to engage the plurality of hollow projections, each recessed tapered opening being contiguous with a respective cavity that extends into the second base;

means for fastening the first base to the second base wherein: a) each cavity within a hollow projection extends through the first base and forms an opening at the second surface of the first base; or b) each cavity within the second base extends through the second base and forms an opening at the second surface of the second base; or c) each cavity within a hollow projection extends through the first base and forms an opening at the second surface of the first base, and each cavity within the second base extends through the second base and forms an opening at the second surface of the second base;

a retaining plate having perforations therein adapted to allow the hollow projections to pass therethrough; and

means for fastening the retaining plate to the second base.

43. (Original) The system of claim 42, wherein each cavity within a hollow projection extends through the first base and forms an opening at the second surface of the first base.

44. (Canceled)

45. (Original) The system of claim 42, wherein each cavity within the second base extends through the second base and forms an opening at the second surface of the second base.

46. (Canceled)